

As is the case in any military career, Joe had to move his family many times. He has a son who is autistic, and each move meant adjustments to new schools, teachers, and therapists. In 1994, Joe decided it was time to retire from the Army so that his family would have a more stable life. After a stint as a USAA board member from 1990 to 1994, Joe joined USAA full time in 1994. He assumed the position of president and CEO in 2007 after serving as the CFO for a number of years.

Under his leadership as CEO, not only has USAA seen exponential growth, it was ranked No. 1 for customer service, satisfaction, or advocacy by Bloomberg Businessweek, MSN Money, the American Association of Individual Investors, Forrester Research, and J.D. Power. Committed to advocating for military families, Joe has guided USAA to become a national leader in hiring veterans and military spouses and offering them careers in the private sector. Joe was invited to the White House and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce to be recognized for USAA's efforts in this area and demonstrating its commitment by ensuring that veterans and military spouses comprised 30 percent of USAA's new hires in 2013.

Beyond those astounding achievements, Joe has also been a dedicated and active member of his community throughout his career. In 2011, Joe was inducted into the Horatio Alger Association of Distinguished Americans. Horatio Alger Award recipients are dedicated community leaders who demonstrate individual initiative, a commitment to excellence, and remarkable achievements through honesty, hard work, self-reliance, and perseverance over adversity.

Joe has left some big shoes for future leaders of the military, USAA, and the San Antonio community. His is the quintessential American story—one of perseverance, work ethic, and fortitude. But if you ask most people who know Joe well, they will tell you what stands out most about him is that he is simply a great human being. He views himself as not just a leader but part of a greater community—a community of people to which he is dedicated and about which he cares deeply. That is really what sets Joe apart from many other hard-charging leaders, and it is why he will be profoundly missed. I offer my congratulations to Joe Robles on a commendable career, a lifetime of achievements and his ability to maintain humility and compassion through it all.

#### COMMEMORATING NATIONAL POW/ MIA RECOGNITION DAY

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I wish to honor all of those brave American men and women who have suffered as prisoners of war, are missing in action, or remain unaccounted for with respect to their service to our Nation. Since 1998, we take the third Friday of every Sep-

tember—this year, the 19th—as a day to acknowledge and remember with these extraordinary men and women. Our servicemembers provide the blanket of security that allows us to sleep safely at night. We cannot thank them enough. But what we can do is pledge to all of the soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines never to forget them and their sacrifice.

During the course of the Vietnam war, over 2,500 military personnel were declared either a prisoner of war or missing in action. In 1971, Mary Hoff, the wife of Lt. Cmdr Michael Hoff, a missing-in-action military officer, saw the need for a flag to honor all of those classified as missing in action, MIA, or prisoner of war, POW. Newt Heisley, a World War II pilot, designed the flag. It is a haunting black flag containing a white silhouette of a servicemember. Behind this servicemember is a single barbed wire and a watchtower in the background, and underneath this image are the words “You are not forgotten.” Just as those words are written on the flag, so they are in my heart. As moving and poignant as this flag is, it was still not enough. On 1979, Congress and the President declared the first POW/MIA Recognition Day. On this day, all Americans shall remember those who gallantly sacrificed their freedom so we can remain free. Just 3 years later, this emblem became the only other flag to fly next to Old Glory over the White House. On 1989, it was installed in the Capitol rotunda as a representation of this Nation's vow to take account for all those who remain missing. As I walk past the rotunda and I see that flag, I always take a moment to remember those who have been declared POW or MIA in my thoughts and prayers. And to those who are still missing, I voice our commitment of never-ending support in finding you and bringing you home. No matter what it takes, we will never stop looking.

This day calls for remembrance of those in the past who have endured these awful fates, but it also reminds us to continue our efforts to bring every American home. From World War II to the 1991 gulf war, more than 83,000 Americans have been pronounced missing. That is a hard number to hear. I commend the actions of the Department of Defense, DOD, and of the personnel—military and civilian—who have wholeheartedly devoted themselves to the cause of finding and returning our courageous servicemembers. I honor and thank all of the Marylanders who have dedicated themselves to this cause. That quest is what our servicemembers and their families deserve, servicemembers such as John Call III of Potomac, MD, who served in Vietnam under the Air Force; POW survivor, Dr. Louis Haberer Tankin of Baltimore, MD, who served in World War II under the Army Medical Corps; Paul Carty of Frederick, MD, declared MIA serving in the Korean war under the Army; and Adnan al-Hilawi, DOD

contractor, who went missing on March 3, 2007, while working in Baghdad, Iraq, and still remains missing today.

I have had the honor to work beside Senator JOHN MCCAIN, a survivor of a POW camp—the infamous “Hanoi Hilton”—in North Vietnam for over 5 years. His experience and courage and triumph and service continue to inspire me. I thank my colleague for his service and sacrifice on our Nation's behalf.

It pains me to think about the fate of these men and women, but no matter the pain, we all must stay true to our pledge never to forget them. And we shall never forget the hardships endured by their family and friends who cannot receive the closure of their beloved servicemember's fate. The U.S. Government owes a great deal of compassion, appreciation, and gratitude to these families and friends.

Joseph Campbell once said, “A hero is someone who has given his or her life to something bigger than oneself.” Every single soldier, airman, marine, and sailor is a hero in my eyes. I pledge to never forget those heroes who have been held prisoner of war or have been declared MIA, and I pledge to all of our service men and women that if you do go missing or are held captive, we will do everything in our power to bring you home and keep you in our memories. Today, this Nation reminds our servicemembers, our citizens, and the world that America “leaves no man behind.”

#### CELEBRATING THE AIR FORCE'S 67TH BIRTHDAY

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, today I wish to celebrate another year of outstanding service from the U.S. Air Force. Through signing the National Security Act of 1947, President Harry Truman awarded our Air Force the respect and recognition it so rightly deserved, highlighting its strategic importance in the U.S. defense system. Sixty-seven years later, the Air Force continues to uphold the freedom and safety of our great Nation, protecting the bastion of democracy that is the United States of America. Today, we express our unwavering admiration and support for an Air Force that fulfills its duties with integrity and excellence. Accomplishing the mission “to fly, fight and win,” the Air Force is a source of national pride, and I have no doubt it will continue in this tradition.

In 1907, the world's first airplane flight soared over the sands of Kitty Hawk, NC, as a soaring, swooping symbol of innovation and technological prowess. The success of this first mission would not have been possible without the pioneering minds of the Wright Brothers, and the same stands today. I commend the skilled airmen of our Air Force: they are the warriors behind our aviation triumphs and their sacrifices and achievements are just as inspiring as those of their 20th-century predecessors. Our airmen are masters of innovation, ensuring the Air Force can

fly, fight, and win with efficiency, speed, and through world-class technology. They have come a long way since 1907 and will no doubt continue along this prominent trajectory.

At present, the capabilities of the U.S. Air Force dwarf comparable forces across the globe. Ours is the largest and most technologically advanced force in the world. Our airmen continuously strive to fulfill the five core missions of the Air Force: No. 1, air and space superiority; No. 2, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance; No. 3, rapid global mobility; No. 4, global strike; and No. 5, command and control—all the while remaining committed to these central duties, the Air Force has recognized that strategic agility is the future. With the new Air Force 30-year strategy, triumphed by Secretary of the Air Force Deborah Lee James and Chief of Staff General Mark A. Welsh III, our outstanding airmen are able to adapt and prepare for a world with ever-evolving global threats. Faced with new challenges, such as the danger posed by ISIL, the Air Force ensures we are one step ahead, placing our freedom and safety out of harm's reach. For the past 67 years our Air Force has proven to be responsive and brave in the face of change. It is a force we can all be proud of and, above all, a force we can trust.

The U.S. Air Force remains one of our most crucial tools for tackling global conflict. Its wide-ranging scope ensures it provides global vigilance, global reach, and global power while helping to manage crises around the world to safeguard our freedom. Using technology in air, space and cyber space, the Air Force has become integral to all fronts of U.S. defense. The Air Force is deployed in war zones, natural disaster relief, and intelligence gathering, demonstrating there are no bounds to its significance. By confronting conflicts around the globe, the Air Force protects U.S. citizens and plays a vital role in spreading peace and freedom to the worldwide population.

The Maryland Air National Guard is a wonderful example of dedicated citizen airmen who serve the Nation, the State of Maryland, and their local communities. An integral part of the Maryland community, our Air National Guard works to ensure the safety of the citizens of Maryland, coordinating responses to any State crises. Yet these same airmen have been called upon to serve in Afghanistan and Iraq, and their experience and talents are an invaluable asset to the Department of Defense. Most recently, the 104th Fighter Squadron of the Maryland Air National Guard deployed four A-10C fighters and 100 personnel to participate in Exercise Saber Strike, supporting strategic training and foreign partnerships in Estonia. This is just one illustration of the good work of the Maryland Air National Guard. Our 175th wing is continually deployed worldwide to assist with training, hu-

manitarian relief, international cyber defense, and combat operations, all of which demonstrate the wide-ranging significance of our Maryland Air National Guard.

When remembering 67 years of stalwart service, we must never forget that we owe these years of triumph to the men and women behind the machines, the airmen. I thank them personally for their dedication and bravery to the United States of America. I am fortunate to have one—Maj. David James Wilson—currently serving on my staff as a defense legislative fellow. We ask a lot of these courageous men and women, and they continue to exceed our expectations with integrity and excellence. They are dedicated to service before self. They sacrifice their personal safety to ensure the U.S. flag continues to stand tall and fly free. They are the warriors who have answered our Nation's call. They are team members who leave no airman behind. They will not falter nor will they fail. For this, we owe them our enduring gratitude, support, and admiration.

Today, on the 67th birthday of our Air Force, we congratulate the men and women who have taken to the skies in defense of our freedom. Their valor and sacrifice humbles me. Let us remember this feeling of awe and pride not just today but every day as we applaud the accomplishments of our Nation's airmen, past and present, and wish the U.S. Air Force a happy 67th birthday.

#### TRIBUTE TO JERRY LINNELL

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, on more than once occasion, I have talked about the hardworking men and women who toil mostly in anonymity here in the Senate. We have people who work on our staffs and on the committees. We have floor and cloakroom staff. We have parliamentarians and legislative counsel and enrolling clerks. We have carpenters and plumbers and electricians. To me, all of these people are part of the Senate family. And I am always grateful for the dedication, skill, and pride each brings to his or her job. Many of these individuals live in Maryland and I am proud to have them as constituents. While we Senators may have our partisan differences, the Senate functions well at an institutional level because of the professionalism and devotion to public service of its staff people who typically log long hours; endure government shutdowns, security threats, and other perturbations; and work in facilities we try to make as accessible as possible to the American people and anyone else who wishes to visit.

Today, I thank one such individual, Jerry Linnell, for 32 years of exemplary service to the Senate and the American people. Jerry is retiring at the end of the month. Jerry joined the staff of the U.S. Senate's Official Reporters of Debates in 1982 and became the Chief Reporter of Debates in 1999. For those

people who may be unfamiliar with the Reporters' office, it is charged with producing a verbatim account of everything that happens here on the floor of the Senate. Even with modern technology employed, that is a daunting task requiring a team of eight skilled reporters who take turns transcribing every word that we Senators utter on the floor. They have to be able to decipher our accents and occasional creative use of the English language, and they have to withstand filibusters. It is a mentally and physically challenging job. The Reporters the Senate employs are highly experienced professionals who take pride in their work. The Office has 15 people overall and a designee from the Government Printing Office, GPO; collectively, they are responsible for producing the Senate's portion of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. The CONGRESSIONAL RECORD is one of the crucial documents of our government.

Jerry is a Minnesota native, born in Duluth and raised in Grand Marais. He played on the high school football team and was captain of the basketball team. He attended the Minnesota School of Business in Minneapolis and graduated from its court reporting program. Jerry's first court reporting job was with Ward & Paul in Washington, DC, before moving to New Carrollton, MD and joining the Baltimore court reporting firm of Salomon Brothers. After several years in Baltimore and at one point passing in one test session 8 of the 9 highest testing requirements set by the National Court Reporters Association, Jerry joined the staff of the U.S. Senate's Official Reporters of Debates.

Jerry and his wife Jane first met on a dance floor; they were members of the DC Swing dance team and danced competitively. They enjoy traveling back to Grand Marais, where Jerry claims to have shoveled more snow than anyone else in the Linnell family, for various music events where he can play his accordion with local musicians and family members. He's also a country music fan.

Jerry is the proud father of Laurie, Jerry Jr., Heather and Katie, and the very proud grandfather of Colleen, Rachel, Leanne, Monica, and Jerry III. He currently serves as the President of the Linnell Family Association, a group composed of the thousands of descendants of Robert Linnell, who first came to the United States in the early 1600s to Scituate, Massachusetts. Jerry has spent many an hour refurbishing his Capitol Hill home, and plans on retiring between that home and a newly purchased and renovated home in North Carolina where he can play golf all year round.

Even though Jerry is a former Maryland resident, he is a diehard Washington Nationals fan. He and his wife Jane love to attend games together. In light of his more than three decades of public service, I won't hold that against him. But with the real prospect